

valued tradition in the South Bay, one that will continue for years to come.

I congratulate Torrance Mayor Dee Hardison on the success this year's parade. I also commend the citizens of Torrance for they are the ones who have helped keep this tradition alive. We live in a great country. It is our Armed Forces who are responsible for protecting and defending our freedom throughout the world.

COMMENDING ISRAEL'S REDE-
PLOYMENT FROM SOUTHERN
LEBANON

SPEECH OF

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in commending Israel for its courageous withdrawal from Lebanon. The Israeli action sends a strong signal that Israel is very serious about pursuing a comprehensive peace with all its neighbors. At the same time, it is critical for this Congress to demand a cessation of all terrorist activities in southern Lebanon and to strongly encourage the government of Syria to remove its troops from Lebanon as well.

GRANTING PERMANENT NORMAL
TRADE RELATIONS TO CHINA

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased with the passage of yesterday's legislation to grant Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) to China. Passage of PNTR is the first step in reforming China and advancing religious freedom and human rights for the Chinese people. Of course, change will not occur overnight in China. However, it will occur gradually through policies of normal trade, exchange and engagement, through peoples of faith, scholars, the workforce, and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit for the RECORD a powerful statement signed by a broad spectrum of religious leaders in support of PNTR. These individuals and their organizations have worked, and will continue to work, for the advancement of religious liberty and human rights.

STATEMENT BY RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN SUPPORT OF PERMANENT NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS WITH CHINA (EXPANDED LIST OF SIGNATORIES)

MAY 23, 2000.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: Soon you will be asked to vote on an issue that will set the course for U.S.-China relations for years to come: enacting Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) with China. Your vote will also have an impact on how human rights and religious freedom will advance for the people of China in the years ahead. We are writing to urge you to vote for PNTR for China because we believe that this is the best way to advance these concerns over the long term.

We share your concern for advancing human rights and religious freedom for the

people of China. The findings of the recent report from the U.S. International Religious Freedom Committee are disturbing to us. Clearly, the Chinese government still has a long way to go.

The question for us all is: What can the U.S. government do that will best advance human rights and religious freedom for the people of China? Are conditions more likely to improve through isolation and containment or through opening trade, investment, and exchange between peoples?

Let us look first at what has already occurred within China over the past twenty years. The gradual opening of trade, investment, travel, and exchange between China and the rest of the world has led to significant, positive changes for human rights and religious freedom in China. We observe the following:

The number of international religious missions operating openly in China has grown rapidly in recent years. Today these groups provide educational, humanitarian, medical, and development assistance in communities across China.

Despite continued, documented acts of government oppression, people in China nonetheless can worship, participate in communities of faith, and move about the country much more freely today than was even imaginable twenty years ago.

Today, people can communicate with each other and the outside world much more easily and with much less governmental interference through the tools of business and trade: telephones, cell phones, faxes, and e-mail.

On balance, foreign investment has introduced positive new labor practices into the Chinese workplace, stimulating growing aspirations for labor and human rights among Chinese workers.

These positive developments have come about gradually in large part as a result of economic reforms by the Chinese government and the accompanying normalization of trade, investment, and exchange with the outside world. The developing relationships between Chinese government officials, business managers, workers, professors, students, and people of faith and their foreign counterparts are reflected in the development of new laws, government policies, business and labor practices, personal freedom, and spiritual seeking. Further, the Chinese government is much more likely to develop the rule of law and observe international norms of behavior if it is recognized by the U.S. government as an equal, responsible partner within the community of nations.

The U.S. government and governments around the world have a continuing, important role to play in challenging one another through international forums to fully observe standards for human rights and religious freedom. However, we do not believe that the annual debate in the U.S. Congress, linking justifiable concern for human rights and religious freedom in China to the threat of unilateral U.S. trade sanctions, has been productive toward that end.

Change will not occur overnight in China. Nor can it be imposed from outside. Rather, change will occur gradually, and it will be inspired and shaped by the aspirations, culture, and history of the Chinese people. We on the outside can help advance religious freedom and human rights best through policies of normal trade, exchange and engagement for the mutual benefit of peoples of faith, scholars, workers, and businesses. Enacting permanent normal trade relations with China is the next, most important legislative step that Congress can take to help in this process.

Sincerely,

Dr. Donald Argue, (Former President, National Association of Evangelicals, rep-

resenting 27 million Christians in the United States of America); John A. Buehrens, (Unitarian Universalist Association); Bruce Birchard, (Friends General Conference); Myrrl Byler, (China Education Exchange, Mennonite Church); Reverend Richard W. Cain, ((Emeritus) President, Claremont School of Theology); Ralph Covell, (Senior Professor of World Christianity, Denver Seminary); Charles A. Davis, PhD, (The Evangelical Alliance Missions); Father Robert F. Drinan, (Professor, Georgetown University Law Center; Member of Congress, 1971-1981); Samuel E. Ericsson, (President, Advocates International, a faith-based global network of lawyers, judges, clergy, and national leaders reaching over 100 nations for justice, reconciliation, and ethics with offices on five continents); Nancy Finneran, (Sisters of Loretto Community); Brent Fulton, (President, ChinaSource, a non-profit, Christian Evangelical organization connecting knowledge and leaders in service to China); Dr. Richard L. Hamm, (Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)); Kevin M. Hardin, (University Language Services); J. Daniel Harrison, (President, Leadership Development International); Bob Heimbürger, (Professor (Ret.) Indiana University); Rev. Earnest W. Hummer, (President, China Outreach Ministries); John Jamison, (Intercultural Exchange Network); Rodolf Mak, Ph.D., (Director of Chinese Church Mobilization, OMF International); Jim Nickel, (ChinaSource, a non-profit, Christian Evangelical organization connecting knowledge and leaders in serve to China); Don Reeves, (General Secretary (Interim) American Friends Service Committee); Rabbi Arthur Schneier, D.D., (President, Appeal of Conscience Foundation); Phil Schwab, (ChinaTeam International Services, Ltd.); Dr. Stephen Steele, (Dawn Ministries); Rev. Daniel B. Su, (Special Assistant to the President, China Outreach Ministries); Bishop Melvin G. Talbert, (The United Methodist Church); Dr. James H. Taylor III, (President, MSI Professional Services International); Finn Torjessen, (Executive Director, Evergreen Family Friendship Service, a Christian, non-profit benefit organization working in China); Joe Volk, (Executive Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation); Rev. Dr. Daniel E. Weiss, (American Baptist Churches, USA); Dr. Hans M. Wilhelm, (China Partner, an organization serving Church of China by training emerging young leaders); Rev. Dr. Andrew Young, (President, National Council of Churches, former ambassador to the United Nations and member of Congress); Danny Yu, (Christian Leadership Exchange).

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL
BARRY BATES

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding Army leader in my District, Major General Barry Bates, as he relinquishes command of the Army & Air Force Exchanges Service, headquartered in Dallas, Texas.

Under his strong visionary leadership, AAFES has served the military community better than at any time in its history. General Bates exercised astute management which led to annual sales of \$7.3 billion and earnings of over \$351 million. This produced the highest per capita dividend (\$284 per service member) for Morale, Welfare & Recreation programs of